

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00127 291057Z

10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

AID-05 OMB-01 /065 W

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R 290950Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2924

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0127

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: FOOTNOTE TO THE BENGHAZI VIOLENCE

1. EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR SA'ADNI GAVE US HIS APPRECIATION OF THE STUDENT VIOLENCE IN BENGHAZI EARLIER THIS MONTH AND ITS EFFECTS ON THOSE INVOLVED. HE SAID THAT HIS INFORMATION WAS THAT A FEW POLICEMEN HAD BEEN KILLED AND OTHERS MAIMED, AND THAT PERHAPS SIX STUDENTS HAD BEEN KILLED IN THE CLASHES. MAJOR SULAYMAN MAHMUD, A FREE OFFICER, HAD BEEN IN CHARGE OF THE SECURITY OPERATION, HE SAID, AND HAD BEEN UNDER STRICT ORDERS FROM QADHAFI TO USE ALL NECESSARY FORCE TO QUELL THE DISORDERS. IN DOING SO, HE HAD RELIED ON THE POLICE, BUT HE HAD ALSO USED MILITARY POLICE AND SPECIAL FORCES UNITS FROM THE ARMY. WE ASKED SA'ADNI WHAT LESSONS HE THOUGHT THE PARTICIPANTS HAD DRAWN FROM THE DEATHS. SA'ADNI SAID THAT, STRANGELY, A KIND OF "SYMPATHY" HAD GROWN UP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND POLICE, AND BOTH SIDES TENDED TO BLAME QADHAFI FOR THE BLOODSHED. SA'ADNI BOUBTED THE ANNOUNCED LIBYAN "INVESTIGATION" INTO THE DISORDERS WOULD RESULT IN ANY ACTION AGAINST MAJOR MAHMUD, ALTHO HAD ONLY BEEN FOLLOWING ORDERS.

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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00127 291057Z

2. COMMENT: SOME ALLOWANCE OBVIOUSLY HAS TO BE MADE
FOR AMBASSADOR SA'ADNI'S NATURAL INCLINATION TO THINK
THE WORST OF QADHAFI, BUT HIS CONFIRMATION THAT THE
ARMY WAS INVOLVED IN THE VIOLENCE IS WORTH NOTING.
CARLE

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NNN

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